

PERSONNEL INSIGHTS

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Comments from Our Technical Director

Like most of you, AFPC/DPC had to identify FOA/DRU reductions. Our Directorate has been fortunate to handle our FY03 cuts through attrition and reassignments. This means that some people have changed jobs and some work is being performed in different parts of DPC. For example, our PACAF servicing team will be moving from DPCTD to DPCC effective 1 Jul 03.

Due to the 12 Jan 03 General Schedule (GS) pay adjustment being split into two parts, with the locality pay portion being done retroactively on 28 Apr 03, our staffers have been focusing on correcting the intervening actions that occurred between 13 Jan and 28 Apr. For most Civilian Personnel Flights (CPF's), this process has already been completed - - only 23 outstanding actions remained as of 6 Jun 03. If any of your employees believe they are not being paid correctly, or that they did not receive their entire retroactive locality pay, please ask your local DFAS Customer Service Representative (CSR) to research this discrepancy. If any of your employees are being underpaid, please contact your servicing staffer and we will determine what action needs to be taken.

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OPM Form 1635

The Office of Personnel Management stopped requiring the collection of Welfare-to-Work data in November 2001. OPM Forms 1635, which captured this information, no longer needs to be completed by new hires. AFPC/DPCT is no longer inputting the codes (A or B) into DCPDS. This is also why the Civilian Virtual Inprocessing (cVIP) does not include an OPM Form 1635.

Corrections due to Locality Pay

As you know, this year's GS/GM/GG/ES/SL/ST pay increase was split into two parts, basic pay and locality. The basic portion ran on 12 Jan 03, the effective date, but the locality portion was delayed until 28 Apr 03. As a result, most intervening actions (occurring between 12 Jan 03 and late April) have to be corrected. The staffers have been diligently working on corrections. We appreciate your patience during this time, as we work on getting employees paid the retroactive salary.

Return of Upfront Staffing

Ten CPFs have been identified for the early transition to Upfront Staffing. We expect to begin the transition sometime in July. Our transition schedule has been impacted by the 40K corrections that needed to be processed due to the delayed implementation of Locality Pay Adjustments. More information will be provided shortly.

Details

The Details process is now working. For a routine detail, management will need to submit one Request for Personnel Action (RPA) for a Nature of Action Code (NOAC) 930 Detail. The AFPC staffer will use the information on the RPA to input a 930 Detail flexfield in DCPDS. This entry will automatically generate a Standard Form 50 (SF-50). On the COB of the NTE date in the 930 Detail flexfield, a NOAC 932 Detail flexfield and Termination of Detail SF-50 will auto-generate.

If another action (such as a promotion) occurs during the life of the Detail, the staffer will need to change the NTE in the 930 Detail flexfield to the day before the effective date of the action (e.g., promotion). The system will automatically generate a 932 Detail flexfield and SF-50. If management wishes to terminate the Detail early, a 932 RPA will need to be submitted to AFPC. The staffer will then change the NTE in the original 930 Detail flexfield to reflect the date on the 932 RPA. The system will automatically generate a 932 Detail flexfield and SF-50.

Extensions will be different than under Legacy. **IF** the NOAC 931 Extension of Detail RPA **IS** received in sufficient time to be processed **before** the original NTE date, the same sequence number can be used. When inputting a 931 Detail flexfield, the start date of the 931 Detail flexfield must be the same as the end date of the previous entry. For example:

The screenshot shows a window titled 'Special Information'. It has two main sections: 'Detail Information' and 'Details'.

Detail Information: This section has a table with two columns: 'Name' and 'Information Exists'. The first row is 'Detail Information' with a checked box in the 'Information Exists' column. There are three empty rows below it.

Details: This section has a table with three columns: 'Start Date', 'End Date', and 'Detail'. The first row shows '25-JAN-2003', '28-FEB-2003', and '930.VZL..D.N.22X89I370302.15.GS.'. The second row shows '28-FEB-2003', '15-MAR-2003', and an empty 'Detail' field. There are six empty rows below the second row.

If the 931 RPA is not received in time to be processed **before** the original NTE date and a 932 Detail flexfield has generated, a **NEW** 930 Detail flexfield with a **NEW** sequence number will be required. A new sequence number is required in 930 Detail flexfields to the same position to ensure the Experience History portion of the Civilian Personnel Data Support System (CPDSS) is annotated correctly.

Please remember that sufficient time for processing includes any announcement, referral, and selection time, if the extension needs to be done competitively.

Reemployed Annuitants and Annuity Changes

Recently, a question came up about reemployed annuitants and updating of annuity amounts. When a CSRS or FERS retired Civil Service employee is hired and the employee's retirement annuity will continue, information about the employee's annuity amount is provided electronically to the Defense Civilian Payroll System (DCPS). Annuitants usually receive Cost-of-Living-Adjustments (COLA) each January, with the adjustment depending upon the retirement system (CSRS or FERS) rules.

The employee is required to provide the new annuity statement for DCPS update. When the employee brings in the new statement, the Customer Service Representative (CSR) faxes it to DCPS for input. Although there is a flexfield in DCPDS for this data, the data itself only flows to DCPS on an initial appointment (1XX) action. Only payroll can get the new annuity value in the DCPS system. AFPC needs to know the employee's annuity amount for the initial appointment, but does not need any updates.

Reprint of Reduction in Force (RIF) Articles

As you no doubt know, there are going to be numerous (over 100) RIFs effective 30 Sep 03. Our RIF Unit continues to receive questions on some RIF topics, so we've decided to reprint a few of the articles to answer the most common questions and areas of concern.

Qualification Requirements for RIF Assignment

Determination Qualifications requirements for assignments is the most contentious part of the RIF. It is only human nature for impacted employees to believe that they qualify for all positions (or can be trained to do them) when they are facing a change to lower grade or separation in RIF. On the other hand, it is also human nature for managers and commanders to resent either having their employees displaced or their vacant positions filled by mandatory placement. As a result, the RIF unit takes a very close look at qualifications before we determine an employee is "fully qualified" for a RIF placement.

To have an assignment right in RIF an employee must be "fully qualified" for the position. This means the employees experience must exceed the standards we set for "basic eligibility" and even "best qualified" for merit promotion consideration. In RIF, the employee's past experience must provide clear evidence that they have the capacity, adaptability, and any special skills required to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of the position without "undue interruption" to the work program. That means they must be able to perform all critical requirements of the job taking in account the pressures of deadlines, priorities and other demands of the organization without loss of quality or production to the organization. Usually if the individual cannot perform these duties within a period of 90 days the organization would be unduly interrupted.

We also consider "undue interruption" in determining qualification for vacancies. The only difference is an extension of the 90-day standard. The RIF candidate still needs to have experience in his/her background that shows they have the capability to perform all the critical elements of the position but for a vacancy we usually extend the amount of time they have before the organization is unduly interrupted. How long we extend it is usually determined by the criticality of the position and/or management's willingness to accept the person (and the interruption).

The undue interruption rule does not apply when placing individuals into vacancies (at their current grade or lower) through either waiver of qualifications, or when making management reassignments. Therefore, we can still get an impacted employee on to a vacant position even when they do not "fully qualify", providing management and the CPF concurs with the placement.

DID You Know (about RIF)?

The following are things about RIF that not everyone knows. Some are options that management at local installations has the right to decide; others have already been decided by Air Force.

(a) USE OF VACANCIES

Within the Air Force, all vacant positions will be used when determining RIF assignment rights. For RIF placement purposes, a vacancy is any established, authorized, funded position at the installation that is

available to be filled; that is, one which does not have a formal hiring restriction (necessitated by funding limits, manpower reductions, etc.).

Air Force also offers vacancies in lieu of separation. This would apply to vacancies which remain unfilled after the reduction in force and which did not meet the definition of "available position" when determining assignment rights (i.e., an offer of a part-time position to a full time employee or offer a position below the three grade bump/retreat limit, offer of a temporary position).

(b) FULLY QUALIFIED IN RIF

To be qualified for assignment to an available position in RIF, including a vacancy, an employee must meet more than just basic eligibility. He/she must be "Fully Qualified" as defined by 5 CFR 351.702. This criterion normally goes beyond the qualifications we require for merit promotion consideration. As a result, employees may not qualify for RIF assignment even though they were referred on a certificate for consideration to that position, or the same series at a higher grade.

An employee is fully qualified for assignment in RIF if they:

1. Meet OPM established standards and requirements for the position, including any minimum educational requirements, and any selective placement factors.
2. Are physically qualified, with reasonable accommodation where appropriate, to perform the duties of the position.
3. Meet any OPM approved special qualifying conditions for the position.
4. Clearly demonstrate based on overall background, including recency of experience, the capability, adaptability, and special skills needed to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position without **undue interruption** to the organization.

(c) WAIVING QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VACANCIES

Waiving qualification requirements during a RIF applies only to the "formal" RIF process (when the employee has been released from his or her competitive level). When both the CPF and the appropriate management official agree, qualifications may be waived for assignment to a vacancy. Waiving qualification requirements, if exercised, should be done with caution. Qualifications should only be waived when there is strong evidence that the individual can perform the duties of the position but lacks all of the qualification requirements. Positive education requirements cannot be waived.

(d) MODIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

In offering positions that are not a RIF assignment right (either in lieu of RIF separation or Pre RIF), you cannot "waive" qualifications. However, the Qualifications Standards Handbook allows the "modification" of standards. When both the CPF and the appropriate management official agree, qualifications may be "modified" for assignment to a vacancy. Modification of Qualifications should be done with caution. Qualifications should only be modified when there is strong evidence that the individual can perform the duties of the position but lacks all of the qualification requirements.

(e) TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES

Local installations need to establish tie-breaking procedures in the event two employees have identical retention standing. Most activities use the tie-breaking procedure (random based upon Social Security number) that is already programmed into AutoRIF.

Installations that do not elect to use AutoRIF's tiebreaker must decide, and document, how ties will be broken. Remember this is an area that is negotiable with your local union.

(f) ASSIGNMENT RIGHTS FOR TENURE GROUP III EMPLOYEES

Term employees are competing employees in RIF (5 CFR 351.203), and are either separated or placed under RIF procedures if their positions are abolished prior to their appointment NTE date.

Within the Air Force, after release from their competitive level, tenure group III employees in the competitive service are considered for vacancies in lieu of RIF separations. This includes permanent vacancies if they are still available after all tenure group I and II have been considered. Since these are offers *in lieu of* separation, the grade limits for assignment rights do not apply.

The Air Force does not provide tenure group III employees bumping rights in the second round reduction in force competition. There is also no authority (under OPM rules) for an agency to provide its group III employees with retreat rights.

(g) ASSIGNMENT RIGHTS FOR EXCEPTED SERVICE EMPLOYEES

There is no OPM or Air Force policy that provides excepted service employees any second round RIF competition consideration. All excepted service employees, regardless of tenure group, are subject to separation after release from their competitive level unless the installation or major command may establish a policy to provide for assignment rights in round two. At its option, the installation or command may provide its excepted service employees with both bumping and retreating rights.

Most installations do not offer bump and retreat rights to their released excepted service employees.

(h) TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

A competitive service temporary employee (tenure group "0") released from a competitive level in RIF does not have any assignment rights; not even to another position in a different competitive level held by a temporary employee.

Temporary employees must be released before a competitive employee (tenure group I, II, or III) is released from the same competitive level. This does not mean that all temporary employees in all competitive levels must be terminated.

Management has the option as to whether they will retain or release temporary employees in those competitive levels not impacted while the agency is undergoing a reduction in force.

(i) TEMPORARY POSITIONS

Although a temporary position is not considered to be an "available" position for RIF assignment, you can make the offer of a vacant temporary position that will last at least 3 months if a competing employee has no other assignment rights and will otherwise be separated.

If used as a RIF offer of assignment, the position must be within the employee's three-grade or grade interval range.

When an employee accepts a temporary position as a RIF offer of assignment the employee retains the same status and tenure.

Temporary positions vacancies below the three grades or grade interval range may only be offered in lieu of RIF separation. Employees can only be offered these positions by conversion (or reemployment). In these placements, the employee must be converted to a tenure group "0" with a NTE date.

(j) REEMPLOYED ANNUITANTS

Reemployed annuitants serve at the will of the appointing officer (i.e., commander) and may be terminated at any time. At management's discretion, the reemployed annuitant may compete in the RIF or may be separated prior to the reduction in force.

Most installations terminate them rather than providing reemployed annuitants with RIF retention rights.

(k) EXCEPTIONS TO THE REGULAR ORDER OF RELEASE

A released employee has the right to use annual leave in order to remain on the agency's rolls past the effective date of the RIF in order to obtain first eligibility for retirement, and/or to gain eligibility to carry health benefits into retirement.

An employee in a relocation situation (e.g., transfer of function, reassignment, realignment, change of duty station, etc.) has the same right to use annual leave past the effective date of separation by adverse action in order to obtain first eligibility for retirement, and/or to gain eligibility to carry health benefits into retirement.

(l) EMPLOYEES ON WORKMAN COMPENSATION IN RIF

An injured employee who is on Leave Without Pay (LWOP) because of a compensable injury enjoys no special protection in a RIF. If the employee is separated by RIF procedures while on LWOP, the individual has no restoration rights.

You may not deny a RIF assignment right to an employee who is reached for release from a competitive level during a leave of absence (LWOP) that resulted from a compensable injury solely because the employee is physically disqualified as a result of the compensable injury. The employee must be treated as if the injury had not occurred.

(m) RIF NOTICES

An employee impacted by a RIF is given at least 60-calendar days specific advance notice of the action that is proposed. There is **no longer** any regulatory requirement to give 120 days notice for a significant RIF (one that involves 50 or more separations); however, many union contracts require a notice period longer than 60 days. There is no maximum timeframe for notice periods.

The notice period begins the **day after** the employee receives the RIF notice. The day the employee receives the notice, or the effective date of the RIF, does not count in the computation of the minimum (60 days) notice period.

You also cannot count a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday as the last day of the minimum notice period.

(n) PLACEMENT ON POSITIONS WITH HIGHER GROWTH POTENTIAL

You may assign an employee under formal RIF procedures (i.e., the employee is released from a competitive level) to a position with higher promotion potential. If this occurs (in formal RIF) after assignment, the employee may be non-competitively promoted to the full performance level of the position. There is also no need to clear the Priority Placement Program (PPP) stopper list to process this promotion action since it is a career promotion.

In the Air Force, employees will not be assigned to a position with higher promotion potential when another affected employee with higher retention standing is eligible for assignment to the position at the target level.

A placement action outside of a formal RIF assignment right (e.g., Pre-RIF, or in lieu of RIF separation) or through modification of qualifications to a position with greater growth potential, must be made competitively in accordance with internal merit promotion procedures.

LWOP-US and Separation-US: How do they impact RIF?

Any Air Force employee who performs duty with a uniformed service (including active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training), whether voluntary or involuntary, is entitled to be restored to the position he or she would have attained had the employee not entered the uniformed service.

Uniformed service means the Armed Forces; the Army and Air National Guard when engaged in active duty for training, inactive duty training, or full-time National Guard duty; the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service; and any other category of persons designated by the President in time of war or emergency.

While on duty with the uniformed services, the Air Force carries the employee on LWOP-US unless the employee requests separation. A separation under these circumstances does not affect restoration rights.

Reduction-in-Force (RIF) Protections while on LWOP-US:

An employee may not be demoted or separated (other than military separation) while on active duty. RIF is not considered "for cause" in this situation. An employee on LWOP-US is not a "competing employee" in RIFs that impact his position or competitive area while they are gone. If the employee's position is abolished during such absence, they are not listed on the retention register (reference 5 CFR 351.404) and the agency must reassign the employee to another position of like status, and pay.

Reduction-in-Force (RIF) Protections upon Return to Duty/Reemployment:

Upon reemployment, an employee may not be discharged, except for cause. Again, RIF is not considered "for cause" in this situation.

- If the period of uniformed service was more than 180 days, the employee is protected from "separation" for a period of 1 year
- If the period of uniformed service was more than 30 days, but less than 181 days, the employee is protected from "separation" for 6 months

If an employee with restoration rights is reached for release from a competitive level in RIF (during the applicable mandatory retention period) the AF is obligated to find another position for the employee rather than separate the employee. This means the RIF could be run, and the employee would compete in it, but the employee could not be separated. They may be downgraded or reassigned through. The agency may also management reassign the individual to another Air Force position in a different competitive area which meets the conditions of his/her restoration rights. Otherwise, they are given a mandatory exception in the retention order for the applicable period of time (that is remaining on their 6 month or 1 year retention period).

Quick Info

Did You Know You Can Register on line for Career Programs?

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp>

Services Directory

AFPC Civilian Employment Internet Addresses

Government Sites (.mil or .gov) or Government Sponsored Site (.com, .edu or .org):

"The links listed below are provided as a service. If you incur problems with these government sites, we are unable to assist you. Please send your request for assistance to the web administrator/POC for the site.

Links will open in a new instance of your browser. To return to the AFPC Web Site, simple close the new browser window."

Civilian Employment Home Page: <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afjobs/>

Directorate of Civilian Personnel Home Page: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc>

When you click on these links, you will be leaving the AFPC Web Site. These links are provided as a service. If you incur problems with these government sites, please send your request for assistance to the Web Administrators for the site.

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Home Page - <http://www.opm.gov>

Human Resources References - <http://www.opm.gov/references/>

USAJobs - <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

Veterans - <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/>

VetGuide/VetsInfo Guide - <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/index.htm>

People With Disabilities - <http://www.opm.gov/disability/>

Students - <http://www.studentjobs.gov>

Reduction In Force (RIF) - <http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/rifmenu.htm>

Retraining Centers "One-Stop Centers" - <http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/onestop.htm>

Other Information

Veteran's Preference Advisor – <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>

America's Job Bank - <http://www.ajb.org>

Dept of Veterans Affairs - <http://www.va.gov/>

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) - <http://www.dfas.mil>

DFAS MyPay (formerly E/MSS) - <http://www.dfas.mil/mypay/>